

HEIDI BYRNES

Georgetown University

What Kind of Resource Is Language and Why Does It Matter for German Studies?

I first considered the question posed in the title of this paper in conjunction with a DAAD-sponsored symposium at Michigan State University, entitled "Engaged Learning: Best Practices to Invigorate German Literary and Cultural Studies." As I revisit the question a year later, I return to the three lenses I used to situate my earlier views, but find each endowed with additional focus. The first and local lens has been sharpened by a repositioning of my comments as an applied linguist in a journal whose readership is primarily made up of scholars in German Studies. That relocation also creates a new, virtual dialogue with the proposals by Katherine Arens, who lays out an intellectually persuasive case for a genre-oriented incorporation of the Standards project into a reconfigured higher education foreign language agenda. The second lens, which considered professional dynamics, has been refined through the call for deep reforms expressed in the MLA Report released earlier this year, "Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World."¹ Almost concurrently, probing questions were also posed within the "language teaching" community, particularly whether "communicative competence" can continue to function as the preferred goal for language teaching and learning in higher education (Byrnes, "Interrogating"). Finally, under the widest angle, the language profession's educative role and its responsibility to be publicly accountable, foreign language departments will have to find ways of assessing student learning in their respective programs (Byrnes, "Outcomes"). To me that amounts to answering this question: how did the program simultaneously lead to students' language learning and to their learning of literary cultural content and how would we know the quality and extent of that learning through diverse forms of assessment?

These developments heighten the stakes and urgency for a response to the question guiding this essay. I propose that the answer will be found by addressing, at an even more fundamental level than has been customary, the relationships among and between language, literature, and culture. Ultimately, that means addressing the relationship between language as a social semiotic system that engenders the human capacity to make meaning in literally unlimited socially construed contexts of situation within an overall

dynamic context of culture—and ways of knowing and learning through language. Such a deep probing requires a focus both on the systemic and functional characteristics of language in general and on the specific ways in which a given language can be analytically and descriptively related to the various social and cultural contexts it construes and which, in turn, underlie its forms of realization. This must be done not ad hoc, but by way of uncovering patterns that are theoretically motivated on the basis of understanding language as a social semiotic system.

Let me briefly elaborate this point with just one example, the notion of “context,” a term both language and literary cultural studies have espoused with much enthusiasm and much imprecision. For both areas, as distinct from other fields of inquiry, context is fruitful only to the extent to which it is traced to noteworthy, patterned differences in language use. For, unless such relations can be established and specified in a principled fashion *that is language-based* and therefore traceable in its formal features at all levels of the system, from specific aspects of lexicogrammar to various text types, including literary texts, we either continue to state the obvious—namely that language is embedded in culture and expresses culture—or are consigned to noting an endless array of language-culture linkages, whether they are conjured up and framed by literary theories or expressed as endless lists of vocabulary items. As the eminent linguist M. A. K. Halliday, to whom I will subsequently refer at some length, stated with regard to the latter practice, the all too frequent observation that Arabs have many words for camels and Eskimos differentiate many forms of snow is almost comical in its misrepresentation of the real issues, namely that for a given language “the grammatical system as a whole represents the semantic code of a language” (*Introduction xxxi*). As regards the former, when discourse- and text-oriented analyses take recourse to non-linguistic conventions they run the risk of yielding no more than “a running commentary on a text” that is “trivial enough to be accessible without a grammar” (xvii). Finally, and perhaps most seriously, by approaching the language-culture link at a remove from language, foreign language departments cannot assume a central responsibility they unequivocally have: to facilitate in explicit and publicly readable ways, as contrasted with various implicit, ad hoc, and “artful” ways, the possibility that their learners will attain, with some considerable measure of efficiency and effectiveness, comfortable and differentiated ways of meaning-making in another language in oral and written texts.

From my vantage point as an applied linguist, literary-cultural and therefore interpretive approaches to texts can affirm this link between language and culture quite well through the construct of genre, a notion well stated in Katherine Arens’s contribution in this volume. But while I concur with a posited overall usefulness of genre-based approaches for all manner of textual forms, that general usefulness must be judged against possible slippage into

various anthropological, sociological, literary-theoretical, or ideological forms of argumentation that increasingly distance themselves from aspects of *language*. Indeed, the extent to which genre-based approaches permit, foster, and perhaps even require such distancing moves also reveals the extent to which they either hinder or support students' *linked learning of language and culture*, no matter how insightful they otherwise are.

If that is so, how language departments would benefit from a fervently advocated interdisciplinarity (e.g., as presented in the MLA Report) deserves the profession's careful consideration. The challenge is formidable: how do foreign language departments propose to create translingual and transcultural competence, a mandate the MLA Report prominently assigns to them? How can they do so when they have yet to come to terms with the patterned links between their most important, their "target language" and its cultural context—that is, German for the German Studies context? How do they, furthermore, propose to accomplish this, when translingual and transcultural competence would surely necessitate that same sophisticated understanding of their "baseline language," in most cases English? And, how, finally, would they negotiate the functional differences between the two linguistic-cultural systems, a challenge that investigations in cognitive-semantic linguistics, language typology, language acquisition at the advanced level, and translation studies rightly highlight? As Chad Wellmon has remarked, without a dramatic radicalization of what language departments as cultural studies departments actually do as they work with their particular language, we are unlikely to add much substance or value to our long-standing assertion of being the best hope for creating intercultural understanding or, as we now say, transcultural competence.

My explorations here are a first beginning for such a more radical discussion. To answer the question posed at the outset of this essay, I take as a point of departure a linguistic perspective, particularly the perspective of grammar as the central semiotic feature of language. More precisely, I single out the notion of grammatics as a way of grappling with the question itself. For, unless we learn to understand grammar, and by extension, language, very differently than we have typically done, a substantive invigoration of our field that will hold up against enormous changes in the academy is difficult to imagine.

Reconsidering the Nature of Language as a Semiotic System

Some Background Considerations

Over the last ten years or so, the foreign language profession has told its professional history in the following interwoven strands: the first strand is that the field has moved from a near exclusive preoccupation with national

literatures as its “content” focus to an interdisciplinary cultural studies focus, whereby literary texts most likely continue to hold a privileged but not a near-exclusive position. The second strand states that a heavily form- or grammar-oriented approach must give way to a pedagogy that emphasizes communicative abilities, whether that is positioned under the proficiency banner or, more recently, under Standards for Language Learning. Finally, a third strand interprets this professional history as moving from a structuralist to a sociocultural orientation, at rare times to a semiotic understanding of language.

Taken together, these refigurations suggest a deep professional unease with the nature of language, which I interpret as a deep misreading of the nature of grammar (Byrnes, “Cultural Turn”). For example, the widely accepted paradigm of communicative language teaching affirms approaches referred to as meaning-driven “focus on form” rather than persisting in an outdated focus on grammar, which has been downgraded to “focus on forms.” That is so even though “focus-on-form” approaches have been challenged to prove their own efficacy in addressing the shortcomings of meaning-focused immersion learning where learners did not acquire the formal features of a language at sufficiently high levels of accuracy. Similarly, in working with literary texts instructors are exhorted to include “grammar” to assure formal accuracy, even though that grammar is essentially a sentence-based and meaning-challenged structuralist version, in other words, a notion of grammar toward which literature scholars should have an inherently critical relationship. Arens states the dilemma like this: “There must be weight given to successful negotiations of nuance and form of communication, not just to grammar—sociopragmatic competencies, including content management in situation- and user-appropriate ways.” Even more tell-tale: “students will have to add competence in pragmatics and sociolinguistics to their expected competencies in language.” One is moved to query: Is making meaning in language ever possible without pragmatic and sociolinguistic aspects of such meaning-making? Is it ever possible without grammar?

In other words, both for language-oriented and for literary-culturally oriented scholars, the problem is indeed with “grammar” and, in reverse, prevailing notions of “grammar” and, by extension, of language are indeed the problem.

Addressing Definitional Concerns: Grammar and Grammatics

To pursue this line of thought, I preface my subsequent remarks with some terminological issues about the notion of grammar, as these have been cogently stated in systemic functional linguistics (SFL), a theory of language associated with the British-Australian linguist Michael Halliday. As a language

theory it is, perhaps, unique for being attuned to the centrality of meaning-making in language and to educational issues in empowering language users in society.

Use of the term “grammar” tends to conflate the study of the phenomenon with the phenomenon itself (Halliday, “On Grammar”). As a result, “grammar” refers both to a central characteristic of the object language, the phenomenon, and also to a metalanguage for its description. For that reason Halliday proposes introducing the additional term “grammatics” to refer to the metalanguage, importantly adding that, “‘grammatics,’ in fact, has no domain until it defines one for itself” (3). So how does SFL define the domain of grammar with regard to the phenomenon language, and in what respects does this differ from the structuralist paradigm that reigns supreme in language teaching and learning, in literary-cultural studies as in second language acquisition (SLA) research, no matter what other changes have occurred?

Grammar as Energy for Meaning-Making

Grammar is a part of language, in fact its privileged part, so much so that one can claim that “language is powered by grammatical energy.” This readership will undoubtedly note the Humboldtian overtones of *energeia*. To clarify this statement, Halliday goes outside language and considers “human communities as eco-social systems which persist in time through ongoing exchange with their environment.” Importantly, “the social practices by which such systems are constituted are at once both material and semiotic,” where “semiotic” expresses Halliday’s concern with “meaning,” less with signs. Because the two systems—the sociocultural and the linguistic—are strongly coupled, it is both possible and necessary to understand them in terms of redundancies, therefore, in terms of “mutual expectancy,” a term Halliday takes from Firth, the eminent mid-20th-century British functional linguist. For that reason also, the semiotic system language is always dynamic, that is, it always involves both system and process. As Halliday phrases this: “a semiotic system is a meaning potential [—that would be language as a system—] together with its instantiation in acts of meaning” (4).

Completing this initial characterization of both grammar and language as a semiotic system, it is useful to contrast it with other semiotic systems, like gesture, dance, or music. The distinguishing characteristic is that language has a grammar. Such a focus may appear to echo, even if faintly, notions of Chomsky’s universal grammar with its focus on syntax. In reality, syntax in the Chomskian sense and grammar in Halliday’s sense are nearly polar opposites. For while syntax is all about ordered rules in a logical space, grammar is all about meaning-making in a sociocultural space of human experience.

Constructions and Construal

A first sign-post for how grammar needs therefore to be reconceptualized, is that grammar “means” in two phases. It has a distinct phase of “wording,” the terminology Halliday uses to refer to the words occurring in spoken or written language texts. That wording simultaneously serves as the material base, as it were, for what become lexicogrammatical constructions and, by extension, what becomes the construction of meaning. In other words, grammar has a “content plane” that contains a “semantics” and a “grammar” and “it is the presence of grammar that gives such a system its unique potential for creating (as distinct from merely reflecting) meaning” (“On Grammar” 5).

A second sign-post for how grammar constitutes the heart of the energetic quality of language is that it creates meaning through construal rather than through reflection or simple representation. While the notion of construal has recently gained a certain fashionable currency in talk about language, as a way of overcoming dominant positivist, meaning-less approaches on the part of most theories of language, its far-reaching consequences for language as the prime way in which we give meaning to our experiences and interactions with others and, ultimately, to language as system remain largely underspecified. By contrast, SFL carefully looks at just how “construal” manifests itself in language understood as text.

Specifically, within the typology of systems, which moves from physical to biological (life) to social (value) to semiotic (meaning), SFL considers language to be at that last, fourth order of complexity. An important distinction is this: semiotic systems first evolve as primary semiotic systems, that is, as inventories of signs understood as content/expression pairs. All higher animals seem to have such sign systems. What makes human language a higher-order semiotic system, however, is precisely the existence of a grammar as “an entirely abstract semiotic construct that emerges between the content and the expression levels of the original, sign-based primary semiotic system. [... It] does not interface directly with either of the phenomenal realms that comprise the material environment of language” (6)—namely phonology or the sounds of language which interface with the human body, and the semantic component which interfaces with the entire realm of human experience. Halliday describes this quite graphically: “grammar evolves as an interface between these two interfaces—shoving them apart, so to speak, in such a way that there arises an indefinite amount of ‘play’ between the two” (6).

How such an understanding of grammar relates to the interests circumscribed by the nexus language, culture, and literature becomes apparent in Halliday’s comprehensive formulation:

The grammar does not, of course, evolve in isolation; meanings are brought into being in contexts of function. The functional contexts of language fall into two major types, and the constitutive function that the grammar performs differs as

between the two types. On the one hand, language “constitutes” human experience; and in this context, the grammar’s function is to construe: the grammar transforms experience into meaning, imposing order in the form of categories, and their interrelations. On the other hand, language “constitutes” social processes and the social order; and here the grammar’s function is to enact: the grammar brings about the processes, and the order, through meaning. And, as we know, the grammar achieves this “metafunctional” synthesis, of semiotic transformation with semiotic enactment (of knowledge with action, if you like), by “constituting” in yet a third sense—creating a parallel universe of its own, a phenomenal realm that is itself made out of meaning. This enables the semiotic process to unfold, through time, in cahoots with material processes, each providing the environment for the other. To put it in other terms, the grammar enables the flow of information to coincide with, and interact with, the flow of events. (7)

Considerations of that sort enable us to characterize language in yet a third way, as the energy behind the functions of language in a sociocultural context, with its multiplicity and also dynamic stability. In *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* Halliday refers to his orientation toward language as “functional” in three ways. First, it is functional in terms of how language is used in society, because everything said or written occurs in some context of use. Second, it is functional in terms of its macro-components that he identifies as the ideational component (how we understand our environment) and the interpersonal component (how we act on and interact with others). Realizing both is the textual component, which is the way the ideational and the interpersonal metafunctions are instantiated in a particular spoken or written text. Finally, it is functional because each element of the language is functional with respect to the whole language system—words and grammatical markers within clauses, clauses within sentences, sentences within textual episodes and so forth. As a result, constellations of lexical and grammatical features themselves take on significance: they become “registers” of language. Manifested in what SFL refers to as *field*, *tenor*, and *mode*, registers construe a particular situational context through the particular bundling of lexicogrammatical forms that instantiates them probabilistically, as contrasted with deterministically, as rules would.

SFL scholar James Martin takes the trajectory I have just laid out—from context of culture to context of situation to register—one step further by focusing on the construct of genre. To him, genres are “linguistically realized activity types which comprise so much of our culture” (“Process” 250), or “verbal strategies used to accomplish social purposes of many kinds.” The key distinction between genre and register is that genre can be analyzed in terms of schematic textual structures. In particular, it is possible to identify “the stages through which one moves in order to realize a genre” (251). As Martin states, because of their “beginning-middle-end structure of some kind, these structures will be referred to as *schematic structures*. Schematic structure represents the positive contribution genre makes to a text: a way of getting from A

to B in the way a given culture accomplishes whatever the genre in question is functioning to do in that culture" (251). In this fashion, genre becomes teachable for whole texts in ways that registers are not, a key characteristic that makes genre such a felicitous construct for pedagogy.

Language, Culture, and Reality: Linguistic Relativity Revisited

To imagine how such a reconfigured understanding of grammar might support a conceptually linked foundation for studies in language, culture, and literature, I turn to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis and its explicit concern with the relationship between thought, language, and culture. Understood in everyday terms, it seems to capture something that travelers between languages regularly experience, namely that different languages construe the world differently and "make" their users see it differently. Investigated more deeply, it points to the central role of grammar in that difference and in that construal. Whorf puts it like this:

Natural logic says that talking is merely an incidental process concerned strictly with communication, not with formulation of ideas. Talking, or the use of language, is supposed only to "express" what is essentially already formulated nonlinguistically. Formulation is an independent process, called thought or thinking, and is supposed to be largely indifferent to the nature of particular languages. Languages have grammars, which are assumed to be merely norms of conventional and social correctness, but the use of language is supposed to be guided not so much by them as by correct, rational, or intelligent thinking. Thought, in this way, does not depend on grammar but on laws of logic or reason which are supposed to be the same for all observers of the universe—to represent a rationale in the universe that can be "found" independently by all intelligent observers, whether they speak Chinese or Choctaw. ("Science" 207–08)

Phrasing his rejection of such an interpretation in positive terms, Whorf notes: "users of markedly different grammars are pointed by their grammars toward different types of observations and different evaluations of externally similar acts of observation, and hence are not equivalent observers but must arrive at somewhat different views of the world" ("Linguistics" 221). In turn, SFL has transposed these largely pretheoretical insights into a highly developed theoretical environment, thereby lending depth and specificity to the project and the potential for being translated into a much-needed language-based pedagogy of knowing and understanding that might yet revitalize language studies.

That possibility occurs most exuberantly at the intersection I earlier identified as the central domain of meaning-making in language, namely the interface between wording and construction, the domain proper of grammar. Because wording and construction form a continuum of meaning-making

potential, SFL refers to this stratum as lexicogrammar. In this fluid and highly context-sensitive environment—the essence of the resource potential of languages—specific languages often make remarkably different choices. Focusing on language in general, Halliday emphasizes that “it is this degree of freedom—the different alignment of semogenic [i.e., meaning-making] resources between the semantics and the grammar—that enables language to extend indefinitely its meaning-making potential. [...] It is also this characteristic which explains how syndromes of grammatical features scattered throughout different regions of the grammar may cluster semantically to form what Whorf called ‘frames of consistency’; cf Hasan’s ‘ways of meaning’ [...], Martin’s ‘grammatical conspiracies’” (“Grammar” 15). While this is not my focus, I trust readers will not find it difficult to see such syndromes as contributing to, or, even more fundamentally, enabling certain forms of language-based aesthetics.

How Might this Invigorate German Studies?

I end by returning to the initial charge, to look for ways of invigorating German literary and cultural studies, leaving readers with a decalogue of issues that I intend both as a way of substantiating my claim that an explicitly language-based approach in language study is both intellectually and practically substantive and as a way of stimulating further reflection.

First and foremost, a language-based approach to what it means to mean with language would seem to offer a unique opportunity to ground our professional work across the diverse interests in language, literature, and culture studies within one conceptual framework.

Second, by revisiting the nature and role for human meaning making, our “ways of saying” and our “ways of meaning” (cf. Hasan), we are offered both the challenge and the opportunity of exploring congruences between the social-cultural environment in which we experience the world and our linguistic ways of construing that reality.

Third, by understanding grammar as fundamentally meaning-oriented and as manifesting most directly the meaning potential of language, we can begin to focus on how language construes a particular communicative event by instantiating a context of situation within a larger context of culture.

Fourth, language education will therefore emphasize languages as a meaning-making semiotic resource: “language is not a *domain* of human knowledge [...] Language is the essential condition of knowing, the process by which experience *becomes* knowledge” (Halliday, “Language-Based” 84, original emphasis).

Fifth, because learning a foreign/second language is about learning how to mean in new and different ways, educational issues in general, and the foreign

language classroom in particular, are “the real world.” Such a stance takes as real the imagined worlds of texts, and is not bound by the strained “reality” or authenticity of “real world interaction” as communicative language teaching has for so long privileged it. Language professionals would then agree with Hasan that “to understand language at its deepest level, we must see it primarily as a cultural phenomenon wherein systems of meaning appear not because the “real” world is thus and thus, but because the world has been construed thus and thus by specific subgroups of humanity; and this construed world *is* their real world” (“Ways of Saying” 234).

Sixth, as a consequence our instructional goal is for learners to reach a competent level of literacy. Crucially, this involves awareness of the meaning-making consequences of different linguistic resources at all levels of the language system, from the lexicogrammar to the staging of arguments in texts, both oral and written. In other words, the animating foundation of our educational work—whether that is in language teaching and learning, or in literary-cultural pedagogies—is a language-based theory of knowing and of learning that facilitates theoretically insightful discussions of literacy (cf. Hasan, “Literacy”) alongside innovative curricula and detailed pedagogical initiatives in literacy education (e.g., Martin, “Semogenesis”).

Seventh, by taking seriously a notion of language as a resource for meaning-making rather than a system of rules to be observed, we also take seriously the notion of choice and voice. But, in contrast with individually focused constraints on processing as psycholinguistics privileges them, notions of choice and voice are socially constrained in order to enable meaning-making that is both in tune with sociocultural expectations, most obviously framed in terms of oral and written genres, and also enabled through precisely those same permeable and often overlapping frames: news as entertainment, information as infomercials. When this is done right, such preferences are teachable within the framework of genre with its probabilistic ways of organizing texts, making textual moves, and selecting lexicogrammatical features.

Eighth, a meaning-focused grammar aims at making it “possible to say sensible and useful things about any text, spoken or written.” That usefulness begins at the level of understanding the text in terms of a linguistic analysis “to show how, and why, the text means what it does. In the process, there are likely to be revealed multiple meanings, alternatives, ambiguities and so on” (Halliday, *Introduction* xv). At the next level one would aim for an evaluation of the text, a stance that would determine its effectiveness or not. In other words, without a theory of wording, both literary and cultural analysis run a high risk of either being language-independent, theory-driven, ideological positions or little more than “running commentary on a text” (xvi), one that furthermore will remain largely private, perhaps even idiosyncratic.

Ninth, a rigorous analysis of texts requires a careful analysis of “context” and a way to relate the textual organization to that outer context. As

Matthiessen reminds us, context is not uninterpreted situation, as much of communicative language teaching would have us believe; a cultural context of situation is itself construed: it relates texts to the social processes within which it is located.

That leaves as the tenth point another insight, which Halliday presents like this:

In any situation involving language and learning, you have to be able to move in both directions: to use the situation to construe the text, as Malinowski did, but also to use the text as a means to construe the situation. The situation, in other words, may not be something that is "given"; it may have to be construed out of the text ... The term that we usually use for this relationship, coming from European functional linguistics, is *realization*: the situation is "realized" in the text. Similarly the culture is "realized" in the linguistic system. This does not mean that the one somehow *causes* the other. The relation is not one of cause. It is a semiotic relationship; one that arises between pairs of information systems, interlocking systems of meaning [...] Thus the culture is construed by systems of language choice; the situation is construed by patterns of language use. (Halliday, "Context" 14–15, original emphases)

In a time of multilingualism, multiculturalism, multiple value systems, and globalization, I can think of few more intriguing issues to pursue in a future German studies than these: they articulate an agenda for the scholarship of teaching and learning of languages; they circumscribe an agenda for the scholarship of crosslinguistic literary-cultural research; and they enable forms of assessment that reflect our particular educative interests. I can think of few more substantive ways of approaching those challenges and those opportunities than through an encompassing understanding of grammar, and by implication, of language.

Note

¹ For the full report: "Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World," 28 Nov. 2007, «<http://www.mla.org/flreport>».

Works Cited

- Byrnes, Heidi. "The Cultural Turn in Foreign Language Departments: Challenge and Opportunity." *Profession 2002* (2002): 114–29.
- . "Perspectives: Interrogating Communicative Competence As a Framework for Collegiate Foreign Language Study." *Modern Language Journal* 90.2 (2006): 244–66.
- . "Perspectives: The Outcomes of Collegiate FL Programs: Specifications, Assessment, Evaluation." *Modern Language Journal* 90.4 (2006): 574–601.

- Carroll, John B., ed. *Language, Thought, and Reality. Selected Writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf*. Cambridge, MA: MIT P, 1956.
- Cloran, Carmel, David Butt, and Geoff Williams, eds. *Ways of Saying, Ways of Meaning. Selected Papers of Ruqaiya Hasan*. London: Cassell, 1996.
- Halliday, M. A. K. "Towards a Language-Based Theory of Learning." *Linguistics and Education* 5.2 (1993): 93–116.
- . *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*. 2nd ed. London: Edward Arnold, 1994.
- . "On Grammar and Grammaticals." *Functional Descriptions: Theory in Practice*. Ed. Ruqaiya Hasan, Carmel Cloran, and David G. Butt. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1996. 1–38.
- . "The Notion of "Context" in Language Education." *Text and Context in Functional Linguistics*. Ed. Mohsen Ghadessy. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1999. 1–24.
- Halliday, M. A. K., and Christian M. I. M Matthiessen. *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*. 3rd ed. London: Edward Arnold, 2004.
- Hasan, Ruqaiya. "Literacy, Everyday Talk and Society." *Literacy in Society*. Ed. Ruqaiya Hasan and Geoff Williams. London: Longman, 1996. 377–424.
- . "Speech Genre, Semiotic Mediation and the Development of Higher Mental Functions." Cloran, Butt, and Williams 152–90.
- . "Ways of Saying, Ways of Meaning." Cloran, Butt, and Williams 191–242.
- Martin, James R. "Process and Text: Two Aspects of Human Semiosis." *Systemic Perspectives on Discourse*. Ed. James D. Benson and William S. Greaves. Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1985. 243–74.
- . "Mentoring Semogenesis: 'Genre-based' Literacy Pedagogy." *Pedagogy and the Shaping of Consciousness: Linguistic and Social Processes*. Ed. Frances Christie. London: Cassell, 1999. 123–55.
- Matthiessen, Christian M. I. M. "Educating for Advanced Foreign Language Capacities: Exploring the Meaning-Making Resources of Languages Systemic-Functionally." *Advanced Language Learning: The Contribution of Halliday and Vygotsky*. Ed. Heidi Byrnes. London: Continuum, 2006. 31–57.
- Wellmon, Chad. "Languages, Cultural Studies, and the Futures of Foreign Language Education." *Modern Language Journal* 92.2 (in press).
- Whorf, Benjamin Lee. "Linguistics as an Exact Science." Carroll 220–32.
- . "Science and Linguistics." Carroll 207–19.

The German Quarterly

VOLUME 81

WINTER 2008

NUMBER 1

CONTENTS

From the Editor vii

FORUM

Credibility: The Next Challenge
. . . Responses by Albrecht Classen, Rolf J. Goebel, John Grimaldi 1

FOCUS ARTICLES

Winds of Change? How Do We Teach Literature
in a Collegiate Environment? KARIN WURST 4

This contribution introduces three articles on the pedagogy of literature and German Studies.

What Kind of Resource Is Language and
Why Does It Matter for German Studies? HEIDI BYRNES 8

This article argues that, in order to flourish, German Studies must come to see language as a social semiotic resource that construes a cultural world. Pivotal for this understanding is an expanded notion of lexicogrammar as the central meaning-making dynamic for oral and written texts. This paper presents key aspects of such a textually and meaning-oriented notion of grammar and suggests how it might inform the integrated teaching and learning of culture and language.

Why Is It so Difficult to Teach Language as Culture?
. KATRA BYRAM AND CLAIRE KRAMSCH 20

A recent report from the Modern Language Association enjoins foreign language educators to "systematically reflect on the differences in meaning, mentality, and worldview as expressed in American English and in the target language." This means teaching not just language and culture, but language as culture. This paper explores why many teachers find it difficult to teach language as culture and makes suggestions based on the teaching of second-year German at the college level.

